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7365 A *Jesus Christ*
M O D E S T P R O O F
O F T H E

Order and Government
Settled by Christ and his Apostles
I N T H E
C H U R C H.

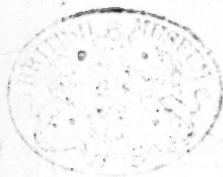
BY SHEWING

- I. What Sacred Offices were Instituted by them.
- II. How those Offices were Distinguished.
- III. That they were to be Perpetual and Standing in the Church. And,
- IV. Who Succeed in them, and rightly Execute them to this Day.

Recommended as proper to be put into the Hands of the Laity.

L O N D O N:

Printed for *John Wyat* at the *Rose* in *St. Paul's*
Church-yard. 1705.



The Publisher to the Reader.

I Was advised by some Pious Persons, who desire Peace and Union among Christians, to reprint this Discourse lately published at *Edinburgh*, in hopes of its good Effect on all Impartial Readers.

The Arguments being wholly Scriptural are not only convincing, but managed with so much Charity, that few Books of Controversy in Religion can Expect a better Reception.

Indeed the Character the Author bears in the World, would much recommend this Discourse, were it proper to name him: But he having no other Aim but purely to do Good, will not allow it.

BOOKS Printed for *John Wyat* at the *Rose* in
S. *Paul's* Church-yard.

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E R R A T A.

PAGE 13. line 29. read *Persecution*. p. 17. l. 9 r. *I am of Paul*. p. 27. l. 31. r. *done*. p. 31. l. 36. after *texts* r. *are*. p. 32. l. 33. r. *power of Synods and Presbyters*,

A
 MODEST PROOF
 OF THE
Order and Government
 Settled by Christ and his Apostles
 IN THE
 CHURCH.

MY design is at present, to represent to the World, what was the primitive Model, or Form of Church-Government; what was settl'd by our Saviour, and his *Apostles*, in this point; and that from what is recorded of the matter in the Books of the New Testament: This is evident from the Title-page; and the end of this undertaking is in order to let all Parties contending for various Forms see which is really the right one, with which if they compare their own they may be enabl'd to continue it or reject it as it agrees with, or deviates from the first Institution.

Now the Church however harrassed and disquieted, with a great variety of Disputes and Debates, about points of *Doctrine* and *Discipline*; yet heard little or no noise made, for above 1400 years, about *this* point of *Church-Government*. One *Aërius* started a debate, but had so few to second him that it died with himself, and left his name on record among *Hereticks*.

The Goodly Order and Government instituted by Christ, stood firm for many Ages; and under it the Church flourished, and the Christian Religion mightily prevailed, notwithstanding the violent Persecutions of those times: But at length it was invaded, and suppressed by the Usurpation and Tyranny of the *Roman Papacy*. A *secular Power*, and *Dominion* was set up; and the *Doctrine*, *Worship*, and *Discipline* of the Church, following the fate of its Government, were corrupted. Error, Superstition, Idolatry and Tyranny, the Pillars of the Papal Kingdom, were introduced: And all maintained, on the one hand, by a most false and blasphemous Pretension to an Absolute infallible Power and Authority derived from Christ; and on the other, by a most horrid and cruel Persecution of all who did but mutter the least Dissent.

Thus lay the Church for some Ages, groaning under this *Anti-christian Usurpation*, struggling and wrestling even unto Blood and Martyrdom, to recover its Primitive Purity and Liberty. It pleased the Lord at length, to deliver it in part, and to retrieve its *Doctrine*, *Worship*, *Discipline* and *Government*, by a longwish'd for Reformation: A Reformation which had been much more happy and complete, had not the *Adversary* scattered his Tares among the good Seed which sprung up in Briars and Thorns: Had not some *Doctrines* and *Customs*, maintained by one part of the Reformed Church, and rejected by an other, occasioned hot disputes, which gave no less disturbance to the Church, than they yielded Pleasure and Diversion to the *Common Enemies*.

Among other differences this was one; that while the greatest and most considerable part of the Reformed Church, retained the Ancient Order and Government, and vindicated it from the Usurpations and Encroachments of the Pa-

Cal. Inst. lib.
4. Cap. 10. §.
32. ne ecclesia
scelesiam con-
temnat ob ex-
terna disci-
plina varia-
tem.

pacy, Others (upon what considerations I shall not enquire) were pleased to set up a new Form and Model of Policy, with a modest kind protestation, that these their different Measures, shou'd be no Ground of breach between them, and other Reformed Churches: But this did not prevent Disputes upon that Head, and every Church defending its own Model, as most agreeable to the first Institution, the debate came to that height, as to occasion

a sad

a sad Rupture and Schism; a Schism which has produc'd no where more woful effects, than in these three Kingdoms: What Alienation of Minds among professors of the same *Reformed Religion*, what Confusions and Barbarous Cruelties, what Convulsions and Revolutions in Church and State, what Publick and Private Mischiefs, have sprung from this Root of Bitterness, the Histories of the past Age, give a very sad and lamentable Account: And above all, the malignant Influence it hath had on Religion, to obstruct the Life and Practice of true Christianity, cannot be sufficiently regretted.

I doubt not but the *Common Enemy*, and they whose trade it is to fish in Muddy Waters, have been very active to *blow this Coal*; but that which hath sometimes made this Debate break forth in *Vesuvian Flames*, and be disputed with Fire and Sword, with Blood and Wounds, is, That it hath been incorporated into, and joyned with other Political Debates and State-differences; It were easie to demonstrate this, did not the evidence of it render it needless; that *Political Interests* and *State-differences*, have all along been interwoven with this contest about *Church Government*, and have supported and maintained it: And perhaps at the Bottom, 'tis none of the least prejudices against *Episcopacy*, that they of that persuasion have generally asserted the *just Rights* and *Prerogatives of Princes*, as the surest Foundation of a Kingdoms Happiness and Tranquillity; and accordingly have maintained the Doctrines of *Non-resistance*, and *Passive Obedience*, &c. whereas its Rival *Government* hath been thought by some, more serviceable for Checking and Curbing the *Power of Princes*. Certain it is, there is too much of a Carnal and worldly Spirit, that keeps this Debate so long alive; and there is little hopes it will die, till Christians be more animated with *1 Cor. 3. 3.* the true Spirit and Temper of the Gospel.

I am sensible there have been very many Volumes which have appear'd in the World upon this Argument, which may seem, or be expected to have exhausted the Subject on both sides; and this may be a prejudice against my present undertaking, as superfluous: And the little good effect those Volumes have had, may make it be look'd upon as Presumption in me to fancy that what I have to

offer will do any good, where so little has been effected by those that have gone before me. But I remember the Story of *Spiridion*, a famous Bishop for Piety, Hospitality and many Miracles, who, is said, to have confounded, at the Council of *Nice*, a certain Philosopher, who by the subtilty of his Arguments against Christianity, sought to imbarass the Bishops. *Spiridion* takes the Discourse, and prays the Philosopher, in the Name of Christ, to hear him; and so goes on, repeating the Articles of the Christian Faith, which, when the Philosopher heard, with great Astonishment he said; *So long as any reasoned with me, I opposed other Reasons; but now when GOD speaks to me, by the Mouth of that old Man, I am not able to answer, I find a secret force upon my Spirit, convincing me and perswading me.* I shall with God's Assistance, follow the Method of this holy Man, in giving as plain and Impartial an Account of the Order and Government instituted by Christ and his Apostles in the Christian Church, as I am able to collect from the sacred Records of the New Testament, to which I purpose closely to adhere. Possibly, what I offer may have as good effect upon some of my Readers, as the good Bishop's like Conduct upon another Occasion, had with the Philosopher: And a clear, and full View of the first Scriptural Institution of Church Government set before our Eyes, may enable all Parties to see most clearly which of the Forms now contended for and promoted bid fairest to be true Copies of the Divine Original.

To proceed the more Methodically, I shall produce what I have to say upon this great Subject, under these four Heads.

I. First, I will shew what sacred Offices, were instituted by Christ, and his Apostles, in the Church.

II. Secondly, I will make it appear, how these Offices were distinguish'd, and demonstrate an Imparity among them.

III. Thirdly, I will examine whether any of them were extraordinary and temporary, and prove that they were not; but design'd to be perpetual, and standing in the Church.

IV. Fourthly,

IV. Fourthly, supposing these Offices to be standing, I will shew who succeed in them, and rightly execute them to this day.

I. First, then, I am to shew what sacred Offices were instituted by Christ, and his Apostles in the Church. •

When our blessed Lord appeared in his publick Ministry, in the beginning thereof he called many unto him, to be his ordinary Attendants, of whom, some had been trained up under *John's* Ministry; These were in a peculiar manner his Disciples, in distinction from the Multitude of Profelites, who were gained by his preaching and Miracles; and he made use of the Ministry of these his Disciples, in baptizing such as were profelyted, As those were baptiz'd, who were made *Profelytes* *John 4. v. 1. 2.* under the old Dispensation. The Eminent Prophets whom GOD raised up to his People, gathered a School or Colledge of Disciples, called *The Sons of the Prophets*, who were trained up under their Inspection and Discipline to the Prophetical Office: So it is to be conceiv'd of the Disciples of *John* the Baptist, and of our Lord, that they were as two Seminaries wherein many were trained up, under the Discipline and Instruction of these two eminent Masters as *Candidates* for the Gospel Ministry: Our blessed Lord being thus attended, with his *Disciples*, *Matth. 9*, went about, *in his own Person*, “all the Cities and Villages, “teaching in their Synagogues, and preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom, and healing every Sickness and “every Disease among the People. And when he saw “the Multitudes come Flocking to him from all quarters, v. 35. “he was moved with Compassion on them, because they “fainted (*being 'tis like wearied with their long Journeys*). “and were scattered abroad as Sheep having no Shep- v. 36. 37. 38. “herd. Then said he to his Disciples, the Harvest truly is “plenteous, but the Labourers are few, pray ye the “Lord of the Harvest, that he send forth Labourers to his Harvest. Upon this *S. Mark* tells us, “(He goeth un- *Mark the 3d. v. 13. 14. Luke 6. v. 12. 13.* “to a Mountain, and calleth unto him whom he would, and they came unto him. *S. Luke* adds, “That he went “to this Mountain to pray, and continued all night in “prayer to GOD, and when it was day, he called unto “him

“ him his Disciples, and of them he chose and ordained
 “ twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might
 “ send them forth to preach; whom also he named *APO-*
 “ *STLES*.

Luke 9. v.
1, 2.

* Some time after, *He called these twelve together, and gave them Power and Authority over all Devils, and to cure Diseases, and sent them forth to preach the Kingdom of GOD, and to heal the Sick; We have their Commission at large Matth. 10.* After their return from executing which first Commission, they continue with their Master as his constant Attendants; and we read not, that, during his abode on Earth, they were sent forth a second time; until he gave them their last and full Commission, a little before his Ascension.

Luke 10.

Some time after the return of the Apostles, *He appointed other seventy, and sent them forth, with the same Commission and the same Power, that he had sent the Apostles, to preach the Gospel, to cast out Devils, to heal Diseases, and almost in all things with the same instructions, concerning their Conduct: which makes the Continuator of Pool's Annotations on the place, say, How some come to imagine a difference of Order betwixt them and the Apostles, I cannot tell: Yet Calvin scruples not to call them, in dignity less than the Apostles, next in Office to them, designed by Christ in the second place after the Apostles.*

Col. Inst. lib.
4. Cap. 3. Sect.
4. dignitate
Apostolis mi-
nores, Officiis
proximi, quos
secundo ab A-
postolis loco
Christus desig-
navit.

* Here We see, in what a solemn manner, Christ instituted the first and prime Officers of his Church, who are particularly described by their Number, Names, and that honourable Designation by which he called them: Whom he also named Apostles.

Indeed all the difference expressed in these *two Missions*, is, that we read not of such a *solemn Inauguration* of the *seventy* unto their Office, as of the *Twelve*; and that the *Twelve* were particularly honoured with the Title of *APOSTLES*, even before they were sent forth (of the importance of which Name, we shall afterwards inquire); but the *seventy*, though they were sent forth immediately by Christ, are no where so call'd, but only Disciples. But though their Commission was much the same, with what was given to the *Apostles*, (who had not as yet received their full Commission) yet it is most certain, that they were *two distinct Orders* of Gospel Ministers: they are never numbered together, but in two distinct *Classes*. The *Apostles*

postles are still *twelve* and not *eighty two*; And (which puts it beyond all question) when a Vacancy falls in the Colledge of *Apostles*, by the Apostacy of *Judas*, what a solemn *Acts* 1. Work was there, at the Translation of one from the Number of Disciples, that he might be reckoned and numbered with the *Eleven*, and succeed to *Judas* his Apostle-ship?

Thus have we seen two Orders of Gospel Ministers instituted by Christ himself. There is a third Order instituted by his Apostles, *that of Deacons*. The occasion, design, and manner of instituting this new Order, we have fully set down in the Sixth Chapter of the *Acts* of the holy Apostles, from the first to the Seventh verse.

Of this Institution I shall only observe; That it was made by the *twelve Apostles*, to whom the Government of the Church was principally committed, and who had Power and Authority to institute new Offices and Officers as the Exigence of the Church should require; That these *Deacons* were appointed and set apart to their Office by the *Apostles*, with the Ceremony of *Prayer and Imposition of Hands*, which was usual in designing and appointing Persons to any sacred Office, in the Gospel Ministry: And further, that these *Deacons* thus separated and ordained were invested with some share of the *Apostolick Office*, particularly of *Preaching* and *Baptizing*, as well as managing the publick Stock of the Church, which they exerted in subordination to the *Apostles*, under their Inspection and by their Direction; That *Stephen* was a Preacher (and the rest of them, of whom we have nothing on record, save their Names) as well as *Philip*, cannot be doubted. *Stephen* by his Zeal in propagating the Gospel, became the first Martyr; and of *Philip* we expressly read, that by his Preaching he converted *Samaria* and initiated the Converts there, into the Christian Profession by *Baptism*. Hence we afterwards find him dignified with the honorable Title of *Philip the Evangelist*, though but one *Acts* 8. and 21. 2. of the Seven.

This I observe to shew, the vast difference betwixt these Gospel *Deacons* instituted and ordained by the *Apostles*, and those who are named *Deacons* under the *Presbyterian Model*, without any Ordination or Power to Preach or Baptize that none may be imposed upon by the bare Name, to think them to be of *Divine* or *Apostolick Institution*.

Thus

Thus much shall serve to shew what I promis'd in the first place, what sacred Offices were instituted by Christ, and his Apostles in the Church.

II. I now come to what I promis'd in the second place, to make it appear how these Offices were distinguished; and to demonstrate an imparity among them.

Now of the last mentioned, there is no debate; all acknowledge that *Deacons* were different from, and inferiour to the two former Offices of Apostles, and the Seventy; 'tis of these two that some are pleas'd to pronounce that they are one and the same; whereas what I have already observed of their Institution, plainly shows them to have been distinct Offices; and they are every where spoken of in Scripture as such: particularly in that enumeration of Gospel Offices, 2 Cor. 12. 28. *God hath set in his Church, first Apostles, secondarily Prophets, thirdly Teachers: Are all Apostles, are all Prophets, are all Teachers?* Though every Apostle, was a Prophet and Teacher, the Superiour Order including the inferiour; yet every Prophet and Teacher, was not an Apostle (as for the rest in that Enumeration, they are not distinct Offices, but various and different Powers and Gifts wherewith the Gospel Officers were endued.)

Acts 15. 32.

Eph. 2. 20.

Ch. 3. 5.

1-Cor. 14. 3.

Silas were; who are also call'd Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers, in the 4th Chapter to the Eph. sians and the 11th verse.

I Say, the question is whether these *Prophets, Pastors and Teachers and Evangelists*, were of the same Office and Order with the *Apostles*? Or, whether they were of a *Distinct Office and Order*, and inferiour to that of the *Apostles*? For clearing this we must consider their *Commissions* and the Exercise of their Office conformable to their *Commissions*.

And first of the *Apostles*. All that their first Commission did bear, was to Preach the Gospel and to Administer the Ordinances of Religion; and this was all the exercise of their Apostolick Office that we read of, during Christ's bodily

bodily presence with them, and in this (as I said) they differed little from the *seventy*: But when Christ was to leave the Earth, having finished the work of our Redemption, He enlarged their Commission, and put them in actual exercise of their Apostolick Power and Office. *All power (says he)* Matth. 28. *is given unto me in Heaven and in Earth, go ye therefore and* 17, 18. *Disciple all Nations, Baptizing them in the Name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have Commanded you, and lo, I am with you alway even to the end of the World. And he lifted up his* Luke 24, 50. *hands, and Blessed them, and said unto them, As my Father* John 20, 21. *sent me, so do I send you;* " and thus saying, he breathed " upon them, and said unto them, receive ye the Holy " Ghost, whose soever Sins ye forgive, they are forgiven, " and whose soever Sins ye retain, they are retained. We Acts 1. read moreover, " That through the Holy Ghost he gave " Commandments to his Apostles whom he had chosen, to " whom he shewed himself alive after his Sufferings, by " many infallible Signs, being seen of them for the space " of Forty Days, and speaking unto them, of the things " pertaining to the Kingdom of God.

All this Commission and Instruction was given particularly to the *Apostles*, as being his *Prime* and Special *Apost. Intro-* *Delegates*, whom he intrusted with the Affairs of his *duct. §. 1. 3.* Church, to Act and do, in his Name and his Authority: And this is the Common Notion and Importance of the Word *Apostle*, according to the use of the Word among the *Jews*: He is a Messenger endued with peculiar Letters of Authority and Commission, whereby he Acts as Proxy and Deputy of him who sends him; and it is a Proverb among the *Jews*, that every *Man's Apostle is as himself*: what he does by Vertue of his Commission, is look'd upon to be as firm and valid, as if the Person himself had done it.

These *Twelve* then whom Christ named *Apostles*, were to represent his Person, to act as his Special *Ambassadors*, to communicate his Will and Mind, to preach and propagate his Gospel, to instruct and disciple the World in the Doctrines and Precepts of Christianity, and on this Doctrine to found and build the Church, and to govern the

C same

2 Cor. 11.
28.

same in his Name and Authority, constituting and ordaining Ministers of Religion, settling good Order, and disposing all Affairs for the Edification of the Church, determining and deciding Controversies in Religion, composing Differences, inspecting and superintending the ordinary Pastors in the Discharge of their Office, censuring and punishing Contumacious Offenders, and loosing such as were Penitent. This the Apostle calls the *Care of all the Churches*, especially them of his Province; for, though their Commission was unlimited and universal, not only in respect of *Power*, to discharge all Acts of Religion, relating either to *Ministry* or *Government*; but also in respect of *Place*, not being confined to any particular Province, but sent to the whole World; yet for the more orderly executing their Commission, they are said, by the Ancients, to have parcelled the World among them; and something like this seems to be insinuated on two several occasions by St. Paul himself.

2 Cor. 10.
13.
Gal. 2. 9.

This *Power* and *Authority* conveyed by Commission to the Apostles, was equally conferred upon all of them: Whatever Order there was among them, yet no *Superiority* or *Power* of one Apostle above another: Though Paul, with respect to his former State, counted himself the least of all the Apostles, being before a Persecutor, and one born out of time, as he words it. Yet as to *Power* and *Authority*, he owns himself not Inferior even to the *chiefest Apostles*.

1 Cor. 15. 9,
10.

And as their *Office* was high and eminent, no less were the *Gifts* and *Endowments*, by which they were qualified for it: They had been Eye and Ear witnesses of Christ's Life, Doctrine, Miracles; and besides the benefit of his publick Ministry, had enjoyed the Advantage of his private Converse, and were well acquainted with all the Passages of his Life, at least from his entering into his *publick Ministry*, till the Day of *Ascension*: They were immediately taught and instructed by him in all things, pertaining to the Kingdom of GOD: he had opened their Minds to understand the Scriptures, and endued them with the *Holy Ghost*, to guide them into all Truth, so that they were infallibly secured from Error, in delivering the Doctrines

doctrines and Principles of *Christianity*: And to confirm their Doctrine, they were endued with many *Extraordinary Gifts* and *Powers*, to work Miracles, to heal all manner of Diseases, to cast out Devils, to speak with divers Tongues, to interpret strange Tongues, to foretel Things to come, to discern Spirits, to inflict Corporal Punishments on Notorious Sinners; and (which was peculiar to them) they had Power to confer these *Extraordinary Gifts* upon others.

Thus have I given you an account of the Commission by which the Apostles acted, I come now to consider the Commission given to the other Order of *Church Officers*, instituted by Christ, the *Seventy Disciples*; in whom the Order of *Presbyters* and ordinary *Pastors* and *Teachers* is supposed to be founded: Now, as it is already shewn, They received their Commission immediately from Christ, as well as the Apostles, and were authorized to preach the Gospel, and endued with *Extraordinary Gifts* of working Miracles, healing Diseases, &c. and unto them no less than unto the Apostles, Christ said, *He that beareth you, beareth me, and he that rejecteth you, rejecteth me, and he that rejecteth me, rejecteth him that sent me.* So that in their Measure and Proportion, so far as their Commission extended, they were Christ's Messengers and Ambassadors also, though not in the same Order and Quality with the Apostles, as we have seen in part already. Luke 10. 16.

Indeed from the Account we have of them and their Ministry in the Sacred History, we cannot frame a more just and true Notion of this *Second Order of Church Officers*, than that they were instituted to be *Assistants* and *Helpers* to the Apostles in the Work of the Gospel.

And I know nothing which will give us a better Reason for this Notion than this Consideration, that as it was the same Lord and Law-giver, the same Master-builder, who had framed the Civil and Ecclesiastical Policy among the Jews, under the Legal Dispensation, who does Erect this New Fabrick of his Gospel-Church; so 'tis reasonable to expect as great a Symmetry and Proportion between the one and the other, as the Difference of the two Dispensations will allow: And it is the Opinion of many Ancient and Modern Divines, That our Blessed Lord in many of

- his *Gospel Institutions*, had some respect to the state of things in the *Jewish Church*, as might be shewed in many Instances: And particularly will appear in these Offices, which he instituted in the *Gospel-Church*, not only in making them of a *Superior and Inferior Order*, as under the *Mosaick Dispensation*, but also, as to the Reason and Design of these different Orders; for after *Aaron* and his Sons were installed in the Priest's Office, GOD gave unto them the whole Tribe of *Levi* to Minister unto them, in the Charge of the Tabernacle. So also, when *Moses* was vexed with the untowardliness of the People, and complained to GOD of the Weight and Burden of his Charge, that the Care and Government of such an unruly People was committed to him alone; the Lord orders that *Seventy Men*, of the *Elders* of the People, be chosen and presented before him at the Door of the Tabernacle, and he took of the Spirit that was upon *Moses*, and put it upon them, that they might bear the burden of the People with him, and he might not bear it alone. Now, whether the *Apostles* after their first Progress, returned with any such Complaint of the greatness of their Charge, we read not, except it be insinuated by St. *Mark*, when he says, That after their return, Christ called them a part to a desert Place, to rest themselves a while: However, certain it is, our Blessed Lord well knew the greatness of their Work, and shortly after, instituted that other Order of Gospel Ministers, the *Seventy* to be Assistants to the Apostles; and accordingly we find the Apostles frequently making use of the Ministry, and Assistance of them of that *Second Order*, either taking some of them along with them in their Travels, to Minister unto them in propagating the Gospel among the *Jews* or Heathens; or else fixing them in places where the Gospel was received, and Churches founded; or else in sending them with Apostolick Orders to Churches that were at a distance: And 'tis probable that according to the different Exercises of their Ministry, they were designed sometimes *Evangelists*, when they laboured in converting *Jews* or Heathens to the Faith; sometimes *Pastors* and *Teachers*, when they exercised their Ministry among them that were already converted; and generally they pass under the Name of *Brethren* and *Elders*, or *Presbyters*, in Distinction from the *Apostles*. From
- Numb. 3.
- Numb. 11.
- Mark 6. 13.

From these *different Commissions* given to the *Apostles* and the *Seventy*; 'tis evident that there was a *Distinction* betwixt their *Offices*, and that the *Apostolick Office* was Superior to that of the *Seventy*, which great Truth may also farther be shown by several very weighty Arguments: For altho' the *Apostles* did manage the Authority we suppose they had, so much with the Spirit of their Lord and Master, who, though he was their Lord and Master, yet humbled himself *to wash their Feet*, and treated them rather as Friends than Servants, and behaved himself among them as one that served, although they (*I say*) following his Example, behaved themselves with the greatest gentleness and sweetness of Temper toward their Inferiors, seldom making use of their Authority in any severe manner; whereof we have a notable Instance in the Epistle of St. Paul to *Philemon*, a Minister of the Gospel, where he says, *Though I might be much bold in Christ to injoin thee, that which is convenient, yet for loves sake, I rather beseech thee.* John 13. 13. 15. 15. Luke 22. 27. *Philem. Ver. 8, 9.* Yet, that they had such Authority over the other Pastors and Teachers in the Church, appears from several Instances of their exercising it in several respects and ways, as is recorded in the Sacred History. I shall instance in some Particulars in Confirmation of this Truth, in the order as they occur to us in Holy Writ.

1. And, *First*, we read that the *Apostles* abode for some time in *Jerusalem*, and the Brethren with them (no doubt according to some Order given them by their Lord) to settle and establish the Christian Church there; but when the Prosecution arose about *Stephen*, all almost, except the *Apostles*, were scattered abroad through the Regions of *Judaea* and *Samaria*: *Philip*, one of the Seven Deacons, went down to *Samaria*, preached the Gospel, wrought Miracles, converted many of that City to the Faith, and initiated his Converts by Baptism: Others went as far as *Phenice*, *Cyprus*, and *Antioch*, where a great number believed and turned to the Lord: When the *Apostles* heard of this, *Peter* and *John* are sent to *Samaria*, to confirm and settle the Church there, and to confer upon them the Gifts of the Holy Ghost. For though the Brethren had Power to Preach and Baptize, and Work Miracles, yet it belonged

belonged to the *Apostles* to settle and establish Order in the new founded Churches, and to confer the Gifts of the Holy Ghost: *Paul* and *Barnabas* were also sent to *Antioch* upon the like Errand.

Acts 11. 22.

2. Secondly, We find that when the Apostles went abroad to execute their Commission in *Discipling* the World, they were attended by some of the Brethren, as their Assistants and Ministers: Six attended *Peter* from *Troas* to *Cesarea*, and from thence to *Jerusalem*; and to them it was that he gave Orders for Baptizing *Cornelius's* Family; and then he brings as Witnesses for his Vindication, when challenged by them of the Circumcision, for his Converse with the Gentiles. *Paul* and *Barnabas* had *John*, surnamed *Mark*, one of the *Seventy*, for their Minister, in their first Progress, who after some time departed from them, for which *Paul* is highly displeased with him, and will not admit him again to be one of his Attendants, because he had departed and went not with them to the Work. This was the occasion of some Contention betwixt *Paul* and *Barnabas*, which came to that height, that they departed asunder the one from the other; *Barnabas* going to *Cyprus*, attended by *Mark*, his Sister's Son; and *Paul* to *Syria* and *Cilicia*, attended by *Silas*.

Acts 10. 13.

38.

11. 12.

12. 25.

13. 5.

Verse 13.

15. 38.

As *Paul's* Province was enlarged, by the Conversion of many Cities and Countries unto the Faith, the Number of his Attendants and Assistants in the Work of the Gospel did also increase, many accompanied him from place to place, besides these Pastors, whom he settled in every City that had received the Gospel.

3. Thirdly, These *Inferior Pastors* were generally very obsequious to the Orders of the *Apostles*, going whither they sent them to Visit planted Churches; coming when they called them, to give their personal Attendance; and serving with them in the Work of the Gospel, as Sons with their Fathers, as *Paul* says of *Timothy*.

Phil. 2. 22.

4. Fourthly, When any of them proved Refractory and Disobedient to the Orders of the *Apostles*, they are blamed for it, and sometimes threatened with Censures; such were some Teachers at *Corinth*, who despised and decried *Paul's* Apostleship, whom he threatens for their disorderly Conduct with the Apostolical Rod.

1 Cor. 4. 18,

19.

5. Fifthly,

5. *Fifthly*, And when he is giving *Apostolical Orders*, for Redressing and Reforming some Irregularities and Abuses in the Publick Worship, occasioned through the Pride or Impudence of some of their Prophets and Teachers, who (it seems) were too much puffed up with their Spiritual Gifts; he writes to them in an Authoritative Stile; *What?* 1 Cor. 14. 36, 37. says he, *Came the word of God out from you, or came it unto you only? If any man think himself to be a Prophet or Spiritual, Let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you, are the Commandments of the Lord, i. e. that I as an Apostle, have Power from the Lord to give Commands and Orders in these matters, which concern the decent and orderly Performance of the Publick Worship; but if any be ignorant, let him be ignorant. He complains also of others, who added Affliction to his Bonds, preaching Christ out of Contention and Strife, disowning his Apostleship, refusing to receive his Commands; yea walking contrary to his Orders, while others preached Christ out of Love, owning his Apostleship, knowing that he was set for the Defence of the Gospel.* And when this Holy Apostle's Back was at the Wall, in Prison, and hazard of Death, many who had been formerly his Attendants and Assistants in the Gospel-work, deserted him, when he stood most in need of their Ministry; which, he prays, might not be laid to their charge. Phil. 1. 15, &c. 2 Tim. 4. 10, 16.

6. *Sixthly*, In like manner St. *John the Apostle* complains of one *Diotrephes*, who affected a Pre-eminence over the Church, disowned the Authority of the Apostle, refused to receive the Orders which he sent to the Church, or the Brethren by whom he sent them; yea, presumptuously took upon him to cast these Brethren, and such who were willing to receive them, out of the Communion of the Church, and to all, added contemptuous and slighting Words of the *Apostle*; whom the *Apostle* threatens, when he comes, to chastise for his Pride and Insolence, in rejecting the Orders of his Superior, and arrogating to himself that Superiority to which he had no Call or Title; for which Malepertness, the Apostle no doubt exercised his Apostolical Power in censuring him, if he did not prevent it by Repentance. John 3. 9, 10.

In a word, through all the *New Testament-History*, we read of none who opposed the *Authority of the Apostles*, but such as were *Hereticks* and *Disturbers* of the Church's Peace, who every where made it their Business to depress the Credit and Authority of the *True Apostles*; and to gain the more easily Profelytes to their false Doctrines, they either
 2 Cor. 11. 13, pretend that they themselves were Apostles, or else that
 14. they themselves were Commissioned by the Apostles,
 Acts 15. 24. whereas truly they were such as had departed from the
 1 John 2. 19. Communion of the Apostles, as St. *John* tells us. And
 Jude 11. St. *Jude* gives us this Account of them, *Wo unto them, they have gone in the way of Cain, a Murderer of his Brother, and ran greedily after the Error of Balaam, a covetous Wretch, and have perished in the gainsaying of Core, a proud ambitious Levite, who disdaining to subject himself to that Order God had settled in his Church, and Murmuring to be set in a lower Station among the Levites, aspired to the*
 Numb. 16. 8, Priesthood. Now it is not easy to understand, how these
 9, 10. *Hereticks* could correspond with *Corah* in his Sin, if Christ had settled a Parity among Church Officers, and not a Superior and Inferior Order.

And as all true Pastors and Teachers were faithful and dutiful Assistants and Helpers, with the *Apostles* in the Work of the Gospel, and punctual Observers of all Apostolick Orders and Commands: So on the other hand, The *Apostles* pay'd always that Respect unto the Pastors, that was due unto their Character, not treating them as Underlings and Servants, but as Brethren and Fellow-labourers and Helpers, admitting them to all their Consultations about Church Affairs, joyning their Names with their own, in the Apostolical Decrees and Constitutions; yet always, with a clear Indication of Distinction and Subordination of their Order unto that of the *Apostles*. Yea, and in some of *Paul's* Epistle to the Churches, after that he designs himself the *Apostle of Jesus Christ*, he subjoyns the Names of some of his Brethren, his Assistants and Fellow-helpers in the Work of the Gospel. And he does most earnestly recommend to the Church, That they have their Pastors in Reputation and Honour. That they know them that labour among them, and are over them in the Lord, and admonish them, and that they esteem them very highly in love
 for

See Acts 1.
 and 15. 22,
 23.

Philip. 2. 29.

for their works sake. That they remember their Rulers with *1 Thess. 5.*
 Respect, obey them, and be subject to them. *12, 13.*

Notwithstanding which, when his Apostleship is called *Heb. 13.*
 in question, or when it is set upon a Level with the *Inferior*
Order, with what Holy Zeal does he assert the Dignity
 and Authority of his *Apostleship*: So when the *Factionous Co-*
rinthians began to state themselves in Parties, and to set in
 Opposition, or at least, upon a Level with him; some of
 their Teachers, saying, *I am of Paul, and I of Apollos*: He
 owns himself the Planter, *Apollo* the Waterer: Himself the
 Master-builder, *Apollo*, and others, as Builders with him. *1 Cor. 3. 6,*
 'Tis true, in this matter, he but borrows his own Name *&c.*
 and *Apollo's*, as he tells us; for it was far from the Apostles *Chap. 4. 6.*
 to set up themselves, as Heads of Factions one against ano-
 ther, neither did any of the faithful Pastors, such as *Apollo*
 was, attempt any such thing. No, it was the turbulent
 Pastors and Teachers who introduced these Factions, with
 design, no doubt, to depress the Authority of the Apostle;
 and advance their own, and to gain Followers. To Correct
 the Arrogance of these Teachers, who being puffed up
 with their Spiritual Gifts, durst thus set up themselves in
 Competition with, or Opposition to, the Apostle; and
 the Fickleness and Fondness of the *Corinthians*, their Ad-
 mirers and Followers, he represents several things, and
 an heavy Complaint of the ill Treatment he, and other
 Apostles, had met with from them. He puts them in
 mind, that though they had ten thousand Instructors in Christ, yet
 they were obliged to own him as their Father, who had be-
 gotten them in Christ by the Gospel, and therefore ought to be
 Followers of him. And if this his Fatherly Admonition
 did not reclaim them, he threatens both these *Factionous*
 Teachers and their Abettors with his Apostolick Rod. *It 1 Cor. 4.*
 was upon the same, or the like occasion, that we find him
 with Holy Keeness asserting and proving his Apostleship,
 magnifying his Office, boasting of that Authority he had
 received from Christ, and once and again, maintaining that
 he was not *Inferior to the chiefest Apostles*. To what purpose *1 Cor. 9.*
 all this, either their denying his Apostleship, or his stre- *2 Cor. 10.*
 nuously asserting it, if there had not been an *Eminency of* *11, 12, 13.*
Power and Authority in the Apostolate, above the Ordinary Pa- *Chapters.*
 stor and Teacher.

Serm. de util.
S. Scrip. Tom.
8. pag. 114
Edit. Savil.

Inst. Lib. 4.
Cap. 4. Sect. 2.

Prophecy, says *Chrysostome*, the Gift of Miracles, the Expelling *Demons*, the Order of Pastors and Teachers, were all Spiritual Powers, and Ensigns of great Authority; but the Apostolick Eminency was far greater than all these, which he therefore calls a Spiritual Consulship. An Apostle having as great Pre-eminence above other Officers in the Church, as the Consul had above all other Magistrates in *Rome*; which is allow'd by *Calvin*, who acknowledges a Bishop to be, *ut Consul in Senatu*, as Consul in the Senate.

Thus, I think, I have done with what I propos'd to make appear in the Second Place, having demonstratively shown how the Gospel-Officers were distinguish'd, and that there was a Disparity among them.

III. I am to examine, *Thirdly*, Whether any of them were Extraordinary and Temporary, and prove that they were not; but design'd to be perpetual and standing in the Church.

And this is the Hing on which the whole Controversy in this matter depends, yea, all the Authority and Obligation of Christ's first Institution, as to the present Church; for if his Institution was Extraordinary and Temporary in any part, it is so far as it was of this Nature, no Rule or Standard now: But if the Order he instituted was to be perpetual and standing, then it continues Obligatory to the end of the World; and it must be to all Christians, what the Pattern in the Mount was to *Moses* and the *Jews*, a constant Standard by which the Church is to be moulded and framed in all After-ages: I shall therefore impartially examine into this Matter.

And, 1st, it is acknowledged by all, that many of the Gifts and Powers wherewith both Apostles, and other Pastors were endued, were *Extraordinary* and *Temporary*, being designed only, as the Apostle says of Tongues, *for Signs*, to convince Unbelievers of the Divinity of that Doctrine which they saw attested by such *Miraculous Operations*: But the Gospel-Doctrine being once sufficiently attested and confirmed, there was no further need of continuing

tinuing them, and they have long since ceased in the Church.

2dly, 'Tis also acknowledged that some things *peculiar* to the first *Apostles*, were *extraordinary* and *temporary*, and expired with their Persons. Such as, Their having been eye and ear Witnesses of Christ's Life, Doctrine, Miracles, Sufferings, Resurrection and Ascension. Their having received their Commission immediately from Christ. Their being infallible Guides in delivering the Doctrines of the Gospel. Their unlimited Commission to all the World, and Jurisdiction over all Churches. Their Power to confer miraculous Gifts on others, to discern Spirits, and to back their censures with corporal Punishments, as on *Ananias* and *Saphira* and *Elimas*: and perhaps, to these may be added their power to institute New Gospel Offices and Ministries, as the exigence of the Church should require; as they did that of *Deacons*. All these extraordinary powers and gifts, whether they which were peculiar to the Apostles, or such as were common to them and other inferiour Ministers, had a particular respect to the first planting of the Gospel, and the erecting and constituting of the Christian Church in the World: which when performed, these extraordinary powers ceased: but,

3dly, Besides these, There was the ordinary power and authority of the Apostles, which was to serve the edification, good order and Government of the Constituted Church in all succeeding ages: such as, Their power to preach the Gospel, administer the Sacraments, and perform all the Offices of Religion common to them with other Pastors. More Particularly, to preserve the offices instituted by Christ in his Church, by ordaining Ministers of Religion in all the three distinct Offices: To Govern the Churches, and superintend both Pastors and People: To judge, correct and censure misdemeanors either in the one or other: To settle good Constitutions agreeable to the word of God, for the orderly and decent performance of all the ordinances of Religion, Publick worship and other affairs of discipline, as the exigence of the Church should require: And Finally, By their authority and care, to preserve the Church from the corruptions of Error, Superstition, Faction, Schism, and Prophaness, by their right use of the Keys

D 2

and

and the power of binding and loosing committed to them : All which are proper parts of the Apostolick Office, always necessary for the good of the Church ; and no part more necessary, than their Authoritative inspection, over the ordinary Pastors, that they be well qualified for the Pastoral Office before they be admitted thereto, and when admitted, they perform the same, with faithfulness and diligence, with prudence and discretion, and in peace and concord with their Brethren. Now, these things being premised, I come to an impartial examination of the matter in hand.

And here I must needs confess I think there is nothing more evident upon the slightest examination than that Christ in Instituting these Orders and Offices, designed, that they should be standing and unalterable constitutions in his Church, to continue for its edification to the end of the World : And of none, is the unalterableness of Institution more evident, than of the Apostolick Office, (which some contend to be temporary and extraordinary.)

For 1st, when Christ gave them their full and last *Mat. 24 8, 18.* Commission, He enjoyns them to teach all Nations, whom they should disciple, to observe all things whatsoever he had *commanded them*, of which the Order and Offices, he had instituted, were a part, which accordingly they were to settle in all new founded Churches : And then he adds, *Lo I am with you alway to the end of the World :* But how could that be, if their Office was to expire with themselves ? We must then understand it, as a promise, not to them only, but to their *Successors* also : not to their *Persons* only, but to their *Office*, which was to continue to the end of the World, even so long as Christ was to have a Church upon Earth.

1 *Cot. 12. 28.* 2^{dly}, The Apostle S. Paul tells us *God hath set some in his Church, first Apostles, secondly Prophets, thirdly Teachers* (what follow, are not distinct Offices from these, but extraordinary Gifts conferred on them.) *God hath set, even, He, who settled the Ordinances of Heaven, which none can alter, hath fixed these different Orders in his Church : or rather, to use the Apostles Simile, as God hath set various and different Members in the natural Body, some more excellent and honourable, yet, all useful and necessary to the*

the Beauty and Integrity of the whole; he has done the same by his Church: So that whoever would deprive the Church of any of these Sacred Offices set in it by God, endeavours no less than to mutilate and deform it, to pluck out one of its Eyes, or cut off one of its Hands: And how heinous the Guilt must be, so to treat the Body whereof Christ Jesus is Head, let them consider who presume to do it.

But farther, Thirdly, in the 4th Chapter of the Epistle to the *Ephesians*, we have an uncontestible Testimony, proving the perpetual continuance of these Offices instituted by Christ, taken from the end and design for which they were instituted: *He gave some Apostles, some Prophets, some Evangelists, some Pastors and Teachers, for the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the Ministry, for the edifying the body of Christ; till we all come in the unity of the Faith and of the Knowledge of the Son of GOD unto a perfect Man, unto the Measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ; That we henceforth be no more Children tossed to and fro, and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the slight of Men and cunning Craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive: Where it is plain, these Offices were to continue till the Church should be perfected, fully brought in, and fully advanced, and till it should be beyond all Hazard of being seduced, that is, to the end of the World. We see the end for which these Offices were Instituted, and how long they were to continue, expressly set down.*

Ephes. 4. 11.
12. 13.

ver. 14.

If any say, That here are more Offices than are pleaded for: The Answer is obvious, that these different Designations do not import different Offices, but different Exercises of the same Office: For Instance, an Apostle, Presbyter or Deacon, might be a Prophet, Evangelist, Doctor or Teacher. If employed in converting Jews or Heathens to the Faith, he did the Work of an Evangelist, and on this Account *Philip*, one of the seven Deacons, is so call'd. If in Instructing them who were already Converted, *Acts 21. 8.* that was the Work of an ordinary Pastor: If he laboured mainly in explaining and confirming the Doctrines of Christianity, he acted the Part of a Doctor or Teacher: If he further improved these Doctrines to Edification, Exhortation and Comfort, that was the Work of the Prophet, in the

1 Cor. 14. 3. the Gospel Sense. Thus *Judas* and *Silas*, two Presbyters,
 Acts 15. 32. are called *Prophets*; so that all these are reducible to the
 three Offices, of whose Institution we have given a parti-
 cular Account.

And now, if these different Orders of Gospel Ministers
 instituted by Christ, were designed by him to be perpetual
 standing Offices in his Church, for its Edification, good
 Order and Government, *to the end of the World*, as is evi-
 dent from what hath been said; there must of Necessity be
 a Succession of Persons, duly called to these Offices, ac-
 cording to Christ's Institution, that the Offices themselves
 may be capable of continuing standing in the Church.

And to erect and set up a new Office Paramount to these
 instituted by Christ, such as the *Papacy*, is intolerable Pre-
 sumption; for who can have a Power and Authority in
 the Church above *Apostles* who were Christ's immediate
 Delegates, but Christ himself?

And it is no less Presumption to cut off, or abrogate any
 of these Sacred Offices: 'tis an overturning that Order e-
 stablished by Christ in his Church, and altering and chan-
 ging his Institution: It is a Sacrilegious Robbing the Church
 of these Ministries which Christ in his infinite Wisdom
 thought necessary for her Edification and Perfection. You
 know what a dreadful Curse is pronounced against them,
 who either add to, or take away from, the Institutions of
 Jesus Christ in the 18th and 19th Verses of the 22d Chap-
 ter of the *Revelations* of St. *John*.

If it be pretended, that now at least, in the present State
 of the Church, both the *Apostolick* and *Prophetick* Offices, may
 be, to as good Purpose, and as great Benefit of the Church,
 performed by the *ordinary Pastors*, acting in *Parity*, and that
 it is therefore needless to keep a distinction of Offices:
 This is to pretend to be wiser than Christ; It is to con-
 found and jumble together the different Orders Instituted
 by him: It is to set up a new Model different from what
 he not only established, but also appointed to continue in
 his Church to the end of the World; it is to cashier Christ's
prime Officers and *Representatives*, and the Churches *principal*
Guides: And to deprive the Church of the Pledges of her
 Lord's Care and Kindness which he gave her, when he
 Ascended up unto Heaven.

If then our Blessed Lord's Institution be preserved, there must be *Apostles*, as well as *Presbyters* and *Deacons* who are not disputed, that is, *Succeffors* to them in their Office in the Christian Church: And who are they? Sure, not every *Pastor*, nor yet any number of them, however modulated into lesser or larger *Judicatories*: I Honour their *Order* and *Office*, but would not have them take too much upon them, nor go beyond their *Sphere*: They are indeed the *Succeffors* of the *Seventy*, if duly admitted to the *Pastoral Office*, and may well rejoyce in that honourable Station to which they are advanced in God's Church, if they Walk worthy of it; but let them remember, that the whole *Seventy* could not fill the Chair of one *Apostle*, (for no Man may take this Honour to himself, but he that is called of *GOD*) until the Holy Ghost did determine the Choice of one to that High Office: I doubt not, but there were upwards of Seven hundred Eminent Pastors, and all endued with *Extraordinary Gifts*, in the Days of the Apostles: But were all *Apostles*? Says St. Paul, No, they were not.

IV. Which brings me to what I promis'd in the *Fourth* and *Last* Place, to shew, supposing these Church-Offices to be standing, who succeed in them, and rightly execute them to this Day.

I need but do it of the *Succeffors* to the Apostles, for when that is done, the other comes in of Course.

And in clearing this Point, I must put you in mind of what was observed under the foregoing Head, That the *Apostles* were endued with some Powers and Gifts, which had a peculiar Reference to the first Planting and Propagating the Gospel, and the first Gathering and Constituting the Christian Church: These were *Extraordinary*, and did Expire with themselves; and in these they have no *Succeffors*.

But the question is concerning the *Ordinary Power and Authority* of the Apostolick Office, as it was instituted and appointed by Christ, to be a standing and continuing Office in his Church when constituted, to serve for the Edification, good Order and Government thereof to all succeeding

succeeding Ages: The Apostles were an Order of the Gospel-Ministers, Superior to Ordinary Pastors and Teachers, to whom Christ in a special Manner committed the Care and Government of his Church: To Dispense the Word and Sacraments, and perform all Offices of Religion: To Ordain Ministers of Religion according to his Institution: To Govern and Superintend his Church both Pastors and People: To Judge, Correct, and Censure Misdemeanors in the one or other: To settle good Orders and Constitutions for the orderly and decent Performance of all Ordinances of Religion, Publick Worship, and Exercise of Discipline, and to preserve the Church from Corruption of Error, Superstition, Faction, Schism, and all Irregular Practices. All these are proper Parts of the *Apostolic Office*, always necessary for the good of the Church; and they are also the proper Officers of a *Bishop, Overseer or Superintendent*. So that 'tis very evident, that in this ordinary and continuing Part of the Apostolick Office, Christ hath instituted the standing Office of *Bishops* in his Church; that is, an Order of Gospel-Ministers, Superior to Pastors and Teachers, to whom he hath committed the Power and Authority above-mentioned.

That the *Apostles* were actually *Bishops*, and their *Apostleship* a proper *Episcopacy*, as it is expressly called, *Acts* 1. 20. and that they actually exerted an *Episcopal Power* and *Jurisdiction* over the Churches, and the Ordinary Pastors and Teachers, *Presbyters* and *Deacons*, I have fully shewed in the Second Inquiry. And accordingly we find the Ancients do frequently in their Writings call the *Apostles*, *Bishops*; and no less frequently do they stile the *Bishops* *Apostles*, as being their Successors in ordinary; by which 'tis evident, they understood, that in the *Apostles*, the *Episcopal Office* was instituted, and that in *Bishops* the *Apostolical Office* is continued in the Church: But this is beyond my Province, having confin'd my self in this Inquiry, to what Light the Sacred Records afford.

And in consulting them we find 'tis evident, *First*, That the *Apostles* were a Superior Order of Gospel-Ministers to *Presbyters* and Ordinary Pastors and Teachers: That to these *Apostles* Christ committed the chief Care and Government of

of his Church, as his Special and Immediate Delegates and Trustees: That the *Inferior Pastors and Teachers* did always own and acknowledge the Apostles as their Superiors, and did readily receive and obey their Orders: That this *Apostolick Order*, Superior to *Presbyters and Deacons*, was to continue in the Church; all which we have fully cleared from Scripture in the former Enquiries. Now, what Order of Gospel-Ministers is there, Superior to Ordinary *Pastors and Teachers*, but that of *Bishops*, in whom the *Apostolick Order* is continued in the Church?

Either then *Bishops* must be the true Successors of the *Apostles*, or else they have no Successors at all, and the *Apostolick Order and Office* is quite Extinct, and the Church is totally deprived of the prime and chiefest Office instituted by Christ for its Edification, good Order and Government: And finally, There is now no such Order of Men extant in the World, to whom that large and ample Commission which Christ gave only to his *Apostles*, does belong: To them it was he gave the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, the Power of Binding and Loosing: Them he sent as his Legates and Ambassadors to the World, as the Father had sent him: Them he instructed in, and entrusted with the great Affairs of his Kingdom, and to them he made that encouraging and gracious Promise, *Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the World*. Now, who can lay Claim to that Commission, or the Promise annexed; but the *Apostles* and their *Successors*? And if they have no Successors now, that they themselves are Dead, all that Commission falls, and the Promise with it; which is absurd to think, and 'tis horrid even to conceive what consequences would follow.

Secondly, It is evident also from Scripture, That the *Apostles* in their own time did confer upon others the *Apostolical Power and Authority*; which they had never done, if they had thought that the Office was confined to their own Persons, and was to end with their respective Lives: They understood better the Mind of their Lord and Master, and the Importance of his Promise, to be with them, *to the end of the World*. Hence they rightly concluded, That they were to commit the Commission given to them, unto the Hands of other faithful Persons, who should in

like manner transmit it to others in a continual Succession, to the end of the World. Accordingly their first Work was to chuse one to succeed *Judas*; and by the Direction of God, *Matthias* is received into the number of the Apostles: So when *James*, the Brother of *John*, is killed by *Herod*, another of that Name was Bishop of *Jerusalem*; to whom as such, *St. Peter* notifies his miraculous Deliverance. He who presided in the Council at *Jerusalem*. He to whom *St. Paul* made his Address when he came thither; and he of whom he speaks in the 19th Verse of the first Chapter of the Epistle to the *Galatians*, whom he calls an *Apostle*, and the *Lord's Brother*: This *James* some will have to be another, than *James*, commonly called *the Less*, one of the first Twelve Apostles; that he was one of the *Seventy*, commonly called *James the Just*, advanced to the *Apostolate*; but however this be, certain it is, That *Paul* and *Barnabas* were received into the *Apostolick Office*, *Paul* immediately called thereunto by Christ at his Conversion. But *Barnabas* in the ordinary manner, when he received that new Name from the Apostles, which signifies *Son of Consolation*. Both of them owned afterwards by the Apostles, *James*, *Peter*, and *John*, as their Fellow Apostles; and in Testimony thereof, they gave them the Right hand of Fellowship; and a particular Commission to the *Gentiles*.

Besides these we read of others rais'd from among the Ordinary Pastors to the Apostolical or Episcopal Order; and endued with a Power and Authority over Churches, and their Pastors and Presbyters; (under what Designation I shall not dispute, inasmuch as the thing is evidently Matter of Fact) for after this manner, *Paul* actually gave to *Timothy* such an *Episcopal Power* over the Church of *Ephesus*, and the Presbyters and Pastors thereof; by Vertue of which Commission, he is Authorized and Instructed in all the Exercise of the *Episcopal Power*. To Command and Charge them, (the Pastors) that they Preach sound Doctrine: To prescribe Rules for the Publick Worship, particularly, that Prayers be offered up for all in Authority: To examine and judge Persons duly qualified for the Sacred Offices of the Gospel, and to give *Impositions of Hands* to, or Ordain none but such as are found duly qualified:

To

To guard diligently against false Doctrines and seducing Spirits, and put the Bretheren in mind, and command them that they give not heed to such Doctrines and Seducers: To Judge, Correct and Censure Offenders, even Chap. 4.
 Presbyters, after due Examination and Conviction: To Ch. 5. 19, 20.
 encourage and promote to higher Degrees such Deacons or Presbyters as were faithful and diligent: And, in a Chap. 3. 13.
 Word, he is instructed how in all things to behave himself, And 5. 17.
 as a good Ruler and Governour in the Church committed to his Care and Inspection; and that with these very remarkably solemn Obtestations; *I charge thee before God, that thou observe these things without partiality or preferring one before another. I give thee Charge in the sight of God and of Jesus Christ, that thou keep this Commandment. O Timothy keep that which is committed to thy Trust.* Chap. 5. 22.
 The like Power and Authority is conferred on Titus over the Churches in Crete. Chap. 6. 13.
That he should set in Order the things that were wanting, and ordain Elders or Presbyters in every City: And, That he should stop the Mouths of the unruly who taught things they ought not: And that he should rebuke them sharply that they may be sound in the Faith: And that if any after due Admonitions, should continue obstinate, he should censure him with Deposition and Excommunication. Titus 4. 5.
 Ver. 9. 10, 11.
 Chap. 3. 10.

These are such evident Proofs of an Apostolical or Episcopal Power conferred upon one Pastor over other Pastors and Teachers, as ought in Reason to satisfy all Men who are not immediately prejudic'd against the Episcopal Order. I will not contend, but that in the Exercise of this Power, they may have taken the Advice and Concurrence of the Faithful Pastors in these Churches, and concerted Affairs with them: and not do Things in an Arbitrary and Despotick manner, as Calvin observes: Yet he allows they had such a Presidency over the Pastors, as the Roman Consul had in the Senate, and more I plead not for. Calvin's Inst. Lib. 4. Cap. 3. Sect. 15.

If it be said, That Timothy and Titus acted only as Paul's Delegates, it weakens not the Argument but rather corroborates it, for it still holds that there was in the Apostles, a Superiour Power and Office, above that of Presbyters, which might be conferred upon and committed to another, whether by Delegation, or by Investiture and Ordination of the Person into the Office, to which that Power and Au-

thority belonged, comes all to one. It is to as little purpose to say, that *Timothy* and *Titus*, exercised this Power and Authority over the Pastors of *Ephesus* and *Crete*, as *Evangelists*; for 1. If the Power was really *Apostolical* and *Episcopal*, 'tis all one, under whatever designation they exercised it; But 2dly, 'Tis altogether groundless; for we find no such Office of an *Evangelist* instituted, distinct from that of *Apostle*, *Presbyter*, or *Deacon*, but that it was a common designation to all who were the first planters of the Gospel among *Jews*, or *Heathens*, which cannot hold in the present case, for their Commission is not only to the unconverted Heathens at *Ephesus* or *Crete*, but to the Churches already settled, and Pastors instituted, in the actual Exercise of their Ministry in these Places over whom they are charged to Exercise this *Episcopal Authority*, as they will answer to *Jesus Christ*, the Supreme Lord of his Church.

And what hath been hitherto observed, makes it to me, very evident, and I think may make it to any other unprejudic'd Person at least highly probable, That the *Angels* of the *Seven Churches* of the *Lesser Asia*, were Persons of the *Apostolical* and *Episcopal* Order: For since there was such an Office of *Apostles* and *Bishops* Instituted by Christ in his Church, whose Office was to Superintend Churches and the Pastors thereof, and by their Authority to settle good Order, to prevent and correct Abuses and Corruptions in *Pastors* and *People*: Who else could these *Angels* be, but Officers of this higher Order? Who therefore are accountable for, and charged Particularly with, any Disorder or Corruption tolerated in their respective Churches: And commended for suppressing and correcting these Disorders, and Purging their Churches of Heretical Teachers.

And, Finally, we cannot entertain the least Doubt of it in our Minds, but that the *Holy Apostles*, to whom our Lord gave special Commission and Power, to Plant and Settle, and Govern his Church in his Name, would be most faithful and exact, in settling that Order, and Instituting these Offices, in all fully Constituted Churches, which their Lord had appointed; and would be careful to leave the Church at their Death, under the same Order and Government, furnished with the same Offices and Mini-

Ministries which Christ himself her Lord, had instituted and appointed for her Edification.

Neither can it be conceiv'd, that any Christian Church could look on herself as rightly Constituted, if any of these sacred Offices Instituted by Christ and his Apostles had been wanting.

And now, having plainly from Uncontestible Matters of Fact, Recorded in the New Testament represented the Order and Government, the different Offices and Powers Instituted by Christ and his Apostles, in the first modeling of the Christian Church; I might add for Confirmation of all that has been hitherto alledg'd, that all the Records we have of the *Antient* and *Primitive Church* do harmoniously attest, That this Order, and these Offices instituted by Christ, were inviolably preserved for many Ages; and so positive are they, as to that *prime Office* of Apostles and Bishops, that they give us particular Catalogues of the Bishops who succeeded the Apostles, in governing the most famous and principal Churches in the World: But to insist on this, would force me beyond the Bounds within which I propos'd to contain myself in my first Entrance upon this Subject.

I shall therefore only give the Testimony of *Calvin* in this Matter, because perhaps his Authority may go further with some, than that of the Ancients: You will find it in the 1st and 4th Sections of the 4th Chapter of his Institutions, where treating of the State of the Church, and the Form of its Government before the Papacy, he says to this Purpose. 'It will be useful in this Matter, to know and consider the Form of the ancient Church, which will represent before our Eyes, a certain Image of the Divine Institution: Although the Bishops of those Times, framed many *Canons*, by which they seem to strain Things beyond what is expressed in Holy Writ; yet with that Caution did they frame all their Order and Government, according to the only Rule of God's Word that you may easily see they had almost nothing in this Matter disagreeable to the Word of God. Yea, though something might be wanting in their Order, yet, because with a sincere Study they endeavour'd to preserve God's Institution, and erred not much from it, it will be very profitable

table, briefly to recount what kind of Custom they had. As we have shewn, there is a threefold Ministry commended to us in Scripture; So whatever Ministers the ancient Church had, it distinguished them into three Orders, *Bishops Presbyters*, and *Deacons*.

And §. 4. That every Province had among their *Bishops*, one who was an *Arch-bishop*, and that in the Council of *Nice*, Patriarchs were appointed, who in Order and Dignity might be superiour to *Arch-bishops*; This was for Preservation of Discipline, that if any thing happened in any Church which could not well be determined by a few, it might be referred to a *Provincial Synod*, and if the Affair were of such Importance that it required a greater Discussion, Application was made to the *Patriarch* with the *Synods*, from whom there was no Appeal, but to a *General Council*: The Government thus constituted, some did call an *Hierarchy*, a Name improper (as seems to me) surely not used in Scripture; for the Holy Spirit would provide, that in the Matter of Church Government, None might Dream of a Principality or Domination; but if laying aside the Name, we view the Thing it self, we will find that the ancient Bishops had no Mind to frame any other Form of Church Government, than what was prescribed by God in his Word. Thus far Calvin.

And I would conclude with these Words, but that I am obliged, for further clearing what hath been hitherto observed, to consider some Passages of Scripture that are commonly objected against what I have advanc'd.

And, First, 'tis alledg'd, that the Names of *Bishop* and *Presbyter* are promiscuously used in Scripture, and therefore they signifie but one and the same Office: It is Answered by some, That this is a great Mistake: And that where ever *Bishops* are named, we are to understand *Bishops* properly so called, and not *Presbyters*, which they make appear from the Texts brought in Favour of the Community of Names; for Instance, *Acts* 20. 27. 28. They say, Paul called both *Bishops* and *Presbyters* unto him, and that the Clergy of all the Cities thereabout were there; for Paul, during his three Years abode in *Asia*, had Conversed with the *Bishops* and *Presbyters* of other Places, than of *Ephesus*, and his appealing to their Knowledge, proves that they were

were present, so that what he says, *ver. 28.* was principally directed to the *Bishops*, and secondarily and by way of Reflection to the *Presbyters*. To *Titus* 1. *Ver. 5, 6, 7.* it is answer'd, That what is there to be found, only proves that he should Advance the *Presbyters* under him, and Ordain *Bishops*, and Dispose of them unto Cities, fixing them to certain Cures; so it follows, *for a Bishop must be blameless, &c.* There were *Presbyters* before at *Crete*, and *Titus* was to ordain some of them *Bishops*: So *1 Tim. 3.* is to be understood of *Bishops properly so called*, that were to be ordained to preside over other Cities, as *Timothy* did over *Ephesus*. *Phil. 1. 1.* may be understood of the *Bishops of Philippi*, and other neighbouring Cities, who were wont to convene and meet together; or it may mean that *Paul*, and the *Bishops* and *Deacons* that were with him, Salute the Saints at *Philippi*. This Answer however not obvious to every one, yet clearly shews how uncertain that alledged Identity of Names is.

But though we should not look upon this Answer as absolutely conclusive, but grant an Identity of Names; yet it will not follow, that there was an Identity of Offices; for Names are common in Scripture, where Offices are acknowledged to be distinct. Thus *Hebrews* the 3d and the 1st, *Christ* is called an *Apostle*; and *1 Pet. 2. 25.* he is called a *Bishop*; *Peter* and *John* call themselves *Presbyters*; and the *Apostles* and *Pastors* are frequently called *Deacons*.
1 Pet. 5. 1.
John, Ep. 2. 3.
1 Cor. 3. 5.
2 Cor. 3. 6.
Col. 4. 7.
17.
1 Thess. 3. 2.
Now it cannot from thence be argued, that the *Apostles* and *Presbyters* Office was one and the same with the *Deacons*: The Name of the Genus is usually given to the Species: The Superior Office including the Inferior, all *Apostles* were *Presbyters* and *Deacons*, though not *vice versa*: Therefore the Identity of Offices is not to be argued from the Identity of Names; for according to the *Presbyterians* themselves, the name *Presbyter* is common to the *Pastor*, and *Ruling Elder*, yet the Offices are vastly distinct.

But, Secondly, several Texts adduced, in which 'tis alledged, That Parity among Church Offices is peremptorily commanded; such as *Matth. 20. 26.* *The Lords of the Gentiles, &c.* and the parallel places, *Luke 9. 47, 48.* *Luke 22. 24.* *1 Pet. 5. 3.*

To which 'tis answered in general, That these Scriptures cannot by any just Rules of Interpretation be understood as condemning a Disparity among Gospel Ministers, nor a Superiority of one Order above another; nor a more eminent Power and Authority in some to Govern the Church above others; nor all Jurisdiction of one Gospel Office above others, but only that, which is exercised with imperious Bitterness and Domination; nor are they interpreted to any such purpose by any Judicious Person of either Perswasion; So that it is not fair, honest, or ingenuous Dealing, in any to make use of these Texts, as condemning *Imparity* among Gospel Officers, in order to amuse the *Populace* and Simpler Sort, who are oft-times soon taken with the Sound of Words, without considering the true Sense and Importance of them.

But to Answer this Objection more particularly, *1st*, That only is forbidden Gospel Ministers, which was practised by *the Lords of the Gentiles*, that is, Secular Dominion and Authority; and it was certain, it was this that the Disciples had in their View, when they contended who should be greatest; for they were mightily possessed with the *Jewish* Opinion, that Christ's Kingdom was to be a Temporal Kingdom; and it is this mistake that Christ removes.

2dly, That Dominion which the Lords of the *Gentiles* exercised, was not one over another, but over their Subjects, so that if it take away all Power of one above another, it will destroy the Power of Ministers over their Flocks: Now, though *Lording over God's Heritage* is expressly discharged; yet the *Pastors Power and Authority over them*, *1 Pet. 5. 3.* is expressly asserted, where they are called Rulers, and the People commanded to obey them: It would also destroy the Power of us Synods and Presbyter, where Ministers rule over Ministers. *Heb. 13. 7. 17.*

3dly, There are in *St. Luke*, some Expressions, which plainly imply a Superiority or Eminency of Power, in some over others, when it is said, *He that is greatest among you*: And when Christ proposes his own Example in what he there enjoyns them, saying, *I am among you as one that ministrereth*; yet none will doubt he was their Lord and Superior

perior, so that the command of *Ministring* takes not away the Superiority and Power.

4thly, It cannot be thought that our Saviour condemned a Disparity among Gospel Ministers, when it is so evident that he actually instituted Ministers of different *Offices* and *Degrees*, First *Apostles*, then *Seventy* others of a Second Order; and his Apostles instituted a Third Order of *Deacons*, who 'tis certain were Inferior to *Presbyters*, as these were to the *Apostles*.

5thly, If our Lord had designed to forbid all *Disparity* or *Subordination* among the Ministers of the Gospel; 'tis like, he would rather have stated the Opposition between them and the Ministers of Religion under the *Mosaick* Dispensation, and not the Lords of the *Gentiles*.

But *Thirdly*, whereas that Passage in the 1st of *Timothy*, the 4th Chapter, and 14th Verse, is brought to prove, That *Presbyters* have a Right or Power to ordain *Presbyters*, and other Gospel Ministers: It is answered, That place proves no such thing. For *St. Jerome*, a zealous Asserter of the Rights of *Presbyters*, acknowledges that Ordination belongs, if not *solely*, yet *chiefly* to *Bishops*. And both *Ancients* and *Moderns*, and among these, *Calvin*, understand *Presbytery* in the fore said place, not of the *Conseffus* or *Collegium Presbyterorum*; the Assembly or Consistory of *Presbyters*; but of the *Munus* or Office *it self*, or the Ordination to the Office of a *Presbyter*; so that the Laying on of the Hands of the *Presbytery* signifies no more than when he was ordained a *Presbyter*; as if *St. Paul* had said, Take heed that the Grace conferred on thee, when I ordained thee a *Presbyter*, be not in vain: Thus *Calvin* Interprets that place; and what confirms this Gloss, is that the *Xapisma*, or Gift spoken of, seems to have respect to these extraordinary Gifts conferred by the *Laying on of the Hands of the Apostles* in the Ordination of *Pastors*, to which the Assistance and Concurrence of others was not necessary.

Calv. Instit.
Lib. 4. Cap.
Sect. 16. ad
finem.

But granting that *Presbytery* is to be understood of the meeting of *Presbyters*, yet it will not prove that they had full Power and Authority to Ordain; for here, at the most; they did but concur and assist in the Ordination of *Timothy*, as is evident from 2 *Tim.* 1. 6. where the Apostle call-

ling him to stir up that Gift, says, that it was conferred on him *by Laying on of his Hands*. Certain it is, that Apostles did Ordain without the Concurrence of Presbyters; but I read not that ever Presbyters ordained without an Apostle or Bishop; and in an Action of that Nature and Importance, it may at least be a just ground of Doubt and Scruple, that there is no Warrant or Precedent to be found for it in Scripture, without which I know not how any can be fully perswaded in his own mind. How far an absolute necessity may alter the case according to the common Axiom, *That many things may be lawful for a Senate when they have no King, that are not when there is one*, I shall not determine.

C O N C L U S I O N.

AND now having finish'd what I design'd at present, that is, having demonstrated from the Scripture's Account of these Matters, what was at first settled in it, and having thence deduc'd what is at present the true Form of Government in the Church of Christ: I shall only add, by way of *Conclusion*, a short Expostulation, in the Spirit of Meekness and Love; and calmly enquire, What is the Ground of all that Noise and Clamour, Hatred and Prejudice, raised against them who are of the Principles, as to the Point of Church-Government, which are here asserted?

'Tis evident we own Christ Jesus the Lord, Head, King, and Lawgiver to his Church, who hath Power and Authority to settle and establish Order and Government therein, and to institute and appoint what Offices, and in what manner he pleases, in his Spiritual Kingdom.

We are fully perswaded, that He, who is of Infinite Wisdom and Goodness, hath disposed all Affairs relating to the Government of his Church, in the most excellent method, in the way and manner that tends most for the Peace and Unity, Order and Security, Edification and Salvation of his Church and People.

We find, plainly and expressly, Three distinct Offices instituted by Christ and his Apostles; one Prime and Chief, the *Twelve Apostles*; and two Subordinate, the *Seventy Disciples*,

cles, and Seven Deacons: These Three Orders of Gospel Ministers are unquestionably of Divine Institution and Appointment. And we cannot find in all the New Testament, that any of them was Extraordinary and Temporary; no, not the least Insinuation to move us to think, that after a short time any of them was to cease. On the contrary, we have the same Evidence for their perpetual Duration, that we have for their first Institution.

And now let any impartially Judge, who do most truly assert Christ's Kingly Office, and the Prerogatives of his Crown? They who plead for his Institution, and closely adhere thereunto, and to the Offices which he hath appointed in his Church; or they, who make bold with his Institution; to abrogate the *prime Office* he instituted, as now long since antiquated and out of use; and that only upon a false and groundless Supposition, that it was *Extraordinary and Temporary*.

The falseness of which I have already shewed under my Third Head, and shall now represent briefly of what a dangerous consequence it is to Religion, to alledge that any of the Offices instituted by Christ, were *Extraordinary and Temporary*, appointed only to serve the *Infancy and First Constitution* of the Church, but not to continue in it, when once constituted. This makes the Rule and Standard of our Religion uncertain and unfixed, and opens a Gap to all Errors: At this rate, and upon the same pretence, *Quakers*, and others, cast off the Gospel Institutions of *Holy Orders, Baptism and the Lord's Supper, &c.* for, say they, these were only *Temporary Ordinances*; but now all the *Lord's People are Holy*, they are all Prophets, the Manifestation of the Spirit, which is given unto all, hath out-dated all these *Rudimentary Elements*.

If any, thus principled, could but gain such an ascendant over the *Populace*, as to inspire them with this Notion, and thereby influence them as much against the Order of *Presbyters*, as they have been against that of *Bishops*; What should then become of Order in the Church, or any Gospel Ordinance? God forbid! That any such wild Caprice should ever seize on Christian People; but I make the Supposition, to represent thereby the dangerous Consequence of that Principle, *That some of Christ's Institutions*

were

were but Temporary: For it may be improved as much, and on as good ground, against the Office of a *Presbyter*, yea, against the positive Institutions of the Gospel, as against the Office of a *Bishop*; and there may come such an unhappy Juncture, when one as well as another, and all as well as one, may thus come to be thought unnecessary. For alas, if the Truth may be told, 'tis greatly to be feared, that not only the Office of *Bishops*, but of all *Pastors*, yea, all the Sacred Institutions of *Christ*, are become intolerable unto too many *Carnal Libertines*, who want but a favourable Opportunity to vent their Minds, and say, *Come, let us break their Bonds asunder, and cast away their Cords from us.*

How will they be able to Answer God, or their own Consciences for it? Who have solemnly combined together to ruin and overthrow that Order, settled by *Christ* in his Church, and have left no Stone unturned, in their restless Endeavours, to bring the Sacred Offices of *Bishops*, and *Pastors* Minist'ring under their Inspection and Government, into perpetual Contempt; and having industriously set themselves to oppose and frustrate all their Gospel Administrations; and not only to alienate the Minds of poor simple People from their *Lawful Governors and Pastors*, but with Noise and Clamour, and bitter Invectives, to inspire them with the highest Rage and Fury to commit the most horrid Outrages on their Sacred Persons, as good Service done to God; and all upon no other Account, but their firm adherence unto the Institution of *Jesus Christ*.

Father, forgive them, they know not what they do: Lord lay not this Sin to their charge, but mercifully open their Eyes, that they may see the Evil of their ways, and may be converted to the Way of Truth and Godliness, Peace and Charity, Unity and Order, and Eternally Saved: Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Now unto GOD the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, be Glory Everlasting. Amen.



F I N I S.

